

Prabuddha Bharata

No. 45—Vol. V—APRIL 1900

GLIMPSES

IT was in one of those old days, when the fire never abated, and the mind brought within range of the luminous atmosphere, soon reached its saturation-point: when it seemed that all that had to be got was attained, and no poverty or lowness of the head or heart could make its existence felt: when in that white heat of the Master's Presence all hearts radiated like the sun, and nothing was too divine, no spiritual conception or realisation too great or out of reach.

* * * *

IT was half-past-six. Narendrakrishna* was singing at the request of the doctor†; for the latter was a constant visitor then professionally, it being about the last days of the Master. There were several others: one of whom was the late Bejoy Krishna Goswami. Narendrakrishna was singing: "Oh Mother! let the wine of Thy love, make us mad; we do not want metaphysical discussion, etc."

Before the song was quite finished the whole assembly was mad. All were echoing: "Mother make us mad, we don't care for metaphysics." Bejoy was the first to be on his legs—beside himself with the inflow of the "Mother's love." Next stood up Sri Ramakrishna—forgetful of the terrible cancer in his throat. The doctor was sitting in his

front, he also got up. The patient and the doctor had both forgotten themselves. Noren II,* was carried away by the flood and was unconscious: so was Lâtu.† The doctor was versed in science, he was staring at them in blank amazement. When the flow of the tide abated, some burst into tears and others laughed as they re-entered their normal consciousness. It all presented the appearance of men helplessly drunk.

* * * *

WHEN all were seated again, and conversation was resumed, Sri Ramakrishna asked the doctor:

"You have just witnessed this ecstatic state, what does your science say to this? Do you think it all affectation?"

The doctor (to Sri Ramakrishna): "When so many men go off like that, it seems natural; it does not look like affectation."

(To Norendra)

"When you were singing, 'Mother make us mad, we don't want metaphysical discussion,' I was nearly beside myself. I was at the point of going off! But I controlled myself with great difficulty; I thought I must not display."

*Babu Norendra Nath Mitra, B. A. B. L., Atty.-at-Law, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, Calcutta.

†The Swami Adbhutananda.

*The Swami Vivekananda.

†The Hon ble Mohendra Lal Sircar, M. D., C. I. E.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

THE NATURE OF THE WORLDLY-MINDED—II

A SPRING cushion is pressed down when one sits upon it, but it soon resumes its original shape when the pressure is removed. So it is with worldly men. They are full of religious sentiments so long as they hear religious talks; but no sooner do they enter into the daily routine of the world, than they forget all those high and noble thoughts and become as impure as before.

So long as the iron is in the furnace it is red-hot, but it becomes black as soon as it is taken out of the fire. So also is the worldly man. As long as he is in places of worship or in society of pious people, he is full of religious emotions, but no sooner does he come out of these associations than he loses them all.

FLIES sit at times on the sweetmeats kept exposed for sale in the shop of a confectioner; but no sooner does a sweeper pass by with his basket than the flies leave the sweetmeats and sit on it. But the honey-bee never sits on filthy objects, and always drinks honey from the flowers. The worldly men are like flies. At times they get a momentary taste of Divine sweetness, but their natural tendency for filth soon brings them back to the dung-hill of the world. The good man, on the other hand, is always absorbed in the beatific contemplation of Divine Beauty.

SEEING the water pass glittering through the net of bamboo frame-work for catching fish, the small fry enter into it with great pleasure, and having once entered they cannot get out again—and are caught. Similarly foolish men enter into the world allured by its false glitter, but as it is easier to enter the world than renounce it, they are caught in it like the fry and imprisoned for good.

ONCE a gentleman with modern education was discussing with the Bhagavan the nature of family-men who are not contaminated by worldliness. Addressing him the Bhagavan said:— “Do you know of what sort your so-called uncontaminated family-man of the present day is? If a poor Brahman comes to beg anything of the master of the house, he being an uncontaminated family-man and having no concern in money matters, as it is his wife who manages all those things, says to the begging Brahman, ‘Sir, I never touch money, why are you wasting your time in begging of me?’ The Brahman, however, proves inexorable. Tired with his importunate entreaties your uncontaminated family-man thinks within himself that the man must be paid a rupee and tells him openly: ‘Well sir, come to-morrow, I shall see what I can do for you.’ Then going in, this typical family-man tells his wife, Look here dear, a poor Brahman is in great distress, let us give him a rupee.’ Hearing the word ‘rupee’ his wife gets out of temper and says tauntingly, ‘Aha! what a generous fellow you are. Are rupees like leaves and stones to be thrown away without the least thought?’ The master in an apologetic tone says, ‘Well dear, the Brahman is very poor and we should not give him anything less than a rupee.’ The wife says, ‘No, I can’t spare that much. Here is a two-anna-bit, you can give it to him if you like.’ As the Babu is a family-man who is uncontaminated with worldliness, he took, of course, what his wife gave him. Next day the beggar got only a two-anna-piece. So you see, your so-called uncontaminated family-men are really not masters of themselves. Because they do not look after their family affairs they think that they are very good and holy men, while as a matter of fact they are hen-pecked husbands solely guided by their wives, and as such are but very poor specimens of humanity.”

UNITY AND CONSISTENCY IN THE VIEWS OF THE VEDIC PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS

(*Concluded*)

IN order to discover the universality and uniformity of views in the writings of our Vedic philosophers, we should pursue this line of thought carefully and intelligently.

Again, may these systems differ ever so much from one other from the point of view of adventitious circumstances, they are fundamentally one, if examined with a true philosophic scrutiny. The ancient sages, ~~one~~ and all, have with one accord declared that the highest aim—the loftiest goal of man is Liberation—the absolute emancipation from the trammels of the world. Therefore let every one—no matter what disposition he has or what way he adopts, strive towards this goal—the Summum Bonum of man.

This is the only aim to be attained by all. Now as to this aim, there is no difference of opinion among the writers of these philosophical systems which unanimously recognize its supreme importance. The differences in opinion are only in respect to the methods calculated to bring about the realisation of this supreme aim.

If it is true that the intelligence and knowledge of men differ in proportion to their respective exertions and capacities, it is quite conceivable that the methods of attainment of such an end are different in accordance with the respective abilities and advancement of the aspirants. In the same manner notwithstanding the identity of their supreme aim, the ancient Vedic philosophical systems inculcate different methods.

Though all these seven systems treat more or less of the ultimate truths of philosophy,

the following three make it their chief business to explain exhaustively the nature of the final goal and the methods to reach it: (1) The Mimamsa, which is inalienably bound up with the Smritis, (2) the Bhakti which is connected with the treatises dealing with Gauni (secondary) Bhakti and other forms of worship and (3) the Vedanta which is linked with the preliminary rules regulating the qualifications of a candidate for the Vedanta study and the Laya-yoga, the Mantra-yoga, the Hatha-yoga and the Raja-yoga.

Hence the more closely and attentively one studies the subtle and abstruse philosophy of the Vedas—the more he is impressed with the sublimity and grandeur of its truths.

All the systems strive to set forth the Supreme Beatitude—the One Real Essence of things—from different standpoints: the Nyaya and the Vaisheshika from the point of view of empirical knowledge, the Yoga and the Sankhya from the metaphysical viewpoint, and the Bhakti, Mimamsa and Vedanta from the lofty pinnacle of transcendentalism. Thus there is a wide field of choice in the paths leading to the final Bliss. In consonance with the sevenfold nature of man, there are these seven methods. Let a man choose the one that he likes best and if he is faithful to it, he will, baptised and purified with spiritual knowledge, reach the Eternal Realms of Supreme Bliss and perfect freedom from the troubles and tribulations of the world.

A close study of these seven departments of the Vedic philosophy will, undoubtedly, show on what a glorious adamantine rock of

Truth the lofty and magnificent superstructures of these systems are upreared.

Just as the sun infilled with the unstained refulgence of the Supreme Being, lights up the universe with its seven coloured rays, even so the knowledge of these seven Shastras, interpenetrated and interfused with the seven-fold truth of the Vedas, enlighten man-

kind smarting under the bonds of threefold misery and show it the path to Salvation—the ever-glorious, ever-enduring elysium of supreme felicity—the quintessence of Existence, Intelligence and Bliss.

A SADHU MEMBER OF THE

NIGAMAGAM MANDALI.

THE STUFF THAT DREAMS ARE MADE OF

(Concluded)

IT is a familiar fact that internal sensations also form a frequent basis of dreams. All the internal organs, when disturbed or distended or excited, may induce dreams, and especially that aggravated kind of dreaming which we call nightmare.

Dreams of flying have so often been recorded—from the time of St. Jerome, who mentions that he was subject to them—that they may fairly be considered to constitute one of the commonest forms of dreaming. All my life, it seems to me, I have at intervals had such dreams in which I imagined myself rhythmically bounding into the air and supported on the air. Several writers have attempted to explain this familiar phenomenon. Gowers considers that a spontaneous contraction of the stapedius muscle of the ear during sleep causes a sensation of falling. Stanley Hall, who has himself from childhood had dreams of flying, boldly argues that we have here “some faint reminiscent atavistic echo from the primeval sea”; and that such dreams are really survivals—psychic vestigial remains—taking us back to the far past, in which man’s ancestors needed no feet to swim or float; but it is rather a hazardous theory, and it seems to me infinitely more probable that such dreams are a misinterpretation of actual internal sensations.

My own explanation was immediately suggested by the following dream. I dreamed that I was watching a girl acrobat, in appropriate costume, who was rhythmically rising to a great height in the air and then falling, without touching the floor, though each time she approached quite close to it. At last she ceased, exhausted and perspiring, and had to be led away. Her movements were not controlled by mechanism, and apparently I did not regard mechanism as necessary. It was a vivid dream, and I awoke with a distinct sensation of oppression in the chest. In trying to account for this dream, which was not founded on any memory, it occurred to me that probably I had here the key to a great group of dreams. The rhythmic rising and falling of the acrobat was simply the objectivation of the rhythmic rising and falling of my own respiratory muscles under the influence of some slight and unknown physical oppression, and this oppression was further translated into a condition of perspiring exhaustion in the girl, just as it is recorded that a man with heart disease dreamed habitually of sweating and panting horses climbing uphill. Further, it is possible that the misinterpretation is confirmed to sleeping consciousness by sensations from without, by the absence of the tactile pressure produced by boots on the

feet, or the contact of the ground with the soles; we are at once conscious of movement and conscious that the soles of the feet are in contact only with the air. Thus in normal sleep the conditions may be said to be always favorable for producing dreams of flying or of floating in the air, and any slight thoracic disturbance, even in healthy persons, arising from lungs, heart, or stomach, and serving to bring these conditions to sleeping consciousness, may determine such a dream.

Many psychologists have referred with profound concern to the facility and prevalence of murder in dreams, sometimes as a proof of the innate wickedness of human nature made manifest in the unconstraint of sleep, sometimes as evidence of an atavistic return to the modes of feeling of our ancestors, the thin veneer of civilization being removed during sleep. Maudsley and Mme. de Manacine, for example, find evidence in such dreams of a return to primitive modes of feeling. But I think we may find evidence that the dream of murder is often a falsely logical deduction from abnormal visceral and especially digestive sensations.

Thus a tragic dream was built up out of a few commonplace impressions received during the previous day, none of which impressions contained any suggestion of murder. The tragic element appears to have been altogether due to the psychic influences of indigestion arising from a supper of pheasant. To account for our oppression during sleep, sleeping consciousness assumes moral causes which alone appear to it of sufficient gravity to be the adequate cause of the immense emotions we are experiencing. Even in our waking and fully conscious states we are inclined to give the preference to moral over physical causes, quite irrespective of the justice of our preferences; in our sleeping states this tendency is exaggerated, and the reign of purely moral causes is not disturbed by even a suggestion of mere physical

causation.

In hysteria (which by some of the most recent authorities, like Sollier, is regarded as a species of somnambulism), in "demon-possession," and many other abnormal phenomena it is well known that there is, as it were, a doubling of personality; the *ego* is split up into two or more parts, each of which may act as a separate personality. The literature of morbid psychology is full of extraordinary and varied cases exhibiting this splitting up of personality. But it is usually forgotten that in dreams the doubling of personality is a normal and constant phenomenon in all healthy people. In dreaming we can divide our body between ourselves and another person. Thus a medical friend dreamed that in conversation with a lady patient he found his hand resting on her knee and was unable to remove it; awakening in horror from this unprofessional situation he found his own hand firmly clasped between his knees; the hand had remained his own, the knee had become another person's, the hand being claimed rather than the knee, on account of its greater tactile sensibility.

There is one other general characteristic of dreams that is worth noting, because its significance is not usually recognized. In dreams we are always reasoning. It is sometimes imagined that reason is in abeyance during sleep. So far from this being the case, we may almost be said to reason much more during sleep than when we are awake. That our reasoning is bad, even preposterous, that it constantly ignores the most elementary facts of waking life, scarcely affects the question. All dreaming is a process of reasoning. That artful confusion of ideas and images which at the outset I referred to as the most constant feature of dream mechanism is nothing but a process of reasoning, a perpetual effort to argue out harmoniously the absurdly limited and incongruous data present to sleeping consciousness. Binet, grounding his con-

clusions on hypnotic experiments, has very justly determined that reasoning is the fundamental part of all thinking, the very texture of thought. The phenomena of dreaming furnish a delightful illustration of the fact that reasoning in its rough form, is only the crudest and most elementary form of intellectual operation, and that the finer forms of thinking only become possible when we hold in check this tendency to reason. "All the thinking in the world," as Goethe puts it, "will not lead us to thought."

It is in such characteristics as these—at once primitive, childlike, and insane—that we may find the charm of dreaming. The emotional intensity, the absurd logic, the tendency to personification—nearly all the points I have referred to as characterizing our dreams—are the characteristics of the child, the savage, and the madman. Time and space are annihilated; gravity is suspended, and we are joyfully borne up in the air, as it were, in the arms of angels; we are brought into a deeper communion with Nature, and in his dreams a man will listen to the arguments of his dog with as little surprise as Balaam heard the reproaches of his ass. In the waking moments of our complex civilized life we are ever in a state of suspense which makes all great conclusions impossible; the multiplicity of the facts of life, always present to consciousness, restrains the free play of logic (except for that happy dreamer, the mathematician) and surrounds most of our pains and nearly all our pleasures with infinite qualifications; we are tied down to a sober tameness. In our dreams the fetters of civilization are loosened, and we know the fearful joy of freedom.

At the same time it is these characteristics which make dreams a fit subject of serious study. And they have this further value, that they show us how many abnormal phenomena—possession, double-consciousness, unconscious memory, and so forth—which have often

led the ignorant and unwary to many strange conclusions, really have a simple explanation in the healthy normal experience of all of us during sleep. Here, also, it is true that we ourselves and our beliefs are to some extent "such stuff as dreams are made of."—*Condensed from Appleton's Science Monthly.*

[The extremely interesting, clear, convincing and profoundly scientific paper of Mr. Havelock Ellis which we have reprinted in these pages, takes no cognisance, unfortunately, of a class of dreams widely known to man in all stages of his evolution—we mean, *true dreams*. It has become sickening—the truism, that science of all things can least suffer the suppression of facts. So that it is almost superfluous to say that perhaps the most important lesson that could be derived from the study of dreams would be altogether lost if the dreams that turn out true in waking life were left out of consideration.

Perhaps it will be well to state at the outset a few of these dreams for the accuracy of which we can vouch. A person, who is a student of Yoga, and given to meditation, has periods, when as a rule all dreams prove to be true. Thus on one occasion, hundreds of miles away from home, he saw one night in sleep, the corpse of an infant wrapped up in clothes, being taken away from his home to be cremated. The birth of this infant had taken place a few days before he left home. It being the period when he knew all dreams would prove to be true, he did not care to write home for confirmation. The next night again he dreamt one of his neighbours was telling him that another neighbour had killed a son, whose mother was dead, and on his expressing surprise, the informant explained that it was indeed a sort of murder, for during many days of illness, the doctor was never called in, and the poor boy died of neglect.

It is needless to mention that on returning

home he found the dreams true to the letter.

On another occasion, the same person dreamt, that he was sitting on a very narrow windowsill baring a part of his body, which was very painful and on which was applied some ointment, over which he was trying to catch the straggling rays of the morning sun. Though regarding it with surprise he did not pay much attention to it and had quite forgotten all about it, when one morning, after six or seven days, he found himself sitting on a windowsill, baring the identical part of his body, with some ointment on, to the sun, exactly as in the dream, and the old memory flashed back into consciousness like lightning. He had a bad abscess.

We shall finish by recording one more dream of this same man. Some time later, while he was still bedridden from the effects of the abscess, he dreamt he was sitting one morning with a few friends in a certain place. As they were talking, another friend joined them, and informed the company of the failure of one of them in his examination for a few marks. The dream was written down on the following morning and shewn to a few friends. About a fortnight later the dream came to be true even to the minutest detail.

The first two cases might be explained by telepathy, but the others do not admit of that explanation. Indeed, if our readers wish to bring them under some "pathy," *sympathy*—of a very high order—would be nearer the mark than any. These scenes were evidently seen in a plane where events gestate before issuing to the sense world: and sympathy was the cause of the retention of these two in the sleeping brain.

To state the theory more fully, the "stream of consciousness"—to use the image adopted by Mr. Havelock Ellis,—issues from a source which is situated in the causal world, or the plane where all events (whether thoughts or actions, individual or natural) form as in a

seed. In those states, when this stream is comparatively calm and clear, so that the wind of sense-desires and the mud and vegetable and other organic matters of troubles, passions and selfishness do not agitate and soil it, things lying deep at the bottom could be perceived. In those times when the self-consciousness is not disturbed or occupied with the presentative and representative dreams, it naturally comes face to face with the seeds—the subtle causal counterparts of things that are to sprout and develop or 'happen' in the waking world. And self-consciousness, which is the very texture of thought or reasoning, manufactures from these seeds, the future groves and gardens in full arrangement and beauty directly as it cognises them.

The necessity of the existence of the causal plane where all things and events germinate before manifestation in the waking-world, thus, becomes unavoidable. That it is the 'object' of self-consciousness has been proved.

Thus the "self-vivisection of our sleeping life" not only teaches us "something regarding the primitive man and the source of some of his beliefs," but something also regarding the coming man and some of the faculties and powers he will develop.

Its imperative lessons regarding the present man are that the sphere of his being and knowledge is not limited by the sense-world, and that other gates of knowledge are hidden in him, which, when opened, will enable him to see the future with the same degree of clearness and precision as he sees the present. —Ed.]

When one is said to sleep, then, is one united with Pure Being and gone back to one's own true self. And just as juices of different trees collected and reduced into the one form of honey by bees can no longer discriminate between themselves as 'I am the juice of *this* tree,' 'I am the juice of *that* tree,' in the same manner all these creatures having reached the Being, do not know that they have reached the Being.—*Chhandogya Upanishad*.

A COMMON PITFALL

"THE man of faith attains wisdom," says the Lord in the 'Song Celestial' and proclaims once more the eternal truth—sung forth by the Rishis of yore and chanted again and again in various tunes by all who came down on earth to hold aloft before humanity the standard of spirituality—that the realisation of unity in variety is perfect wisdom. For faith does not mean a sudden effervescence of sentimentalism or a dazzling display of intellectual feats. Faith has no concern with these passing shadows which vanish away before the tremendous facts of life; it stands unmoved in the innermost depth of the heart as the one vital principle of all thought and action, in the midst of the varying destinies of earthly existence. It is the intuitive perception of an eternal relation with something which by its overwhelming prominence throws into shade the ever-vanishing shows of the world and draws us away from its diversified occupations to a close touch with the Permanent Reality. A man's real worth is estimated by the amount of faith he has in the Supersensuous Existence, for it always determines and gives shape to the nature of every work he does, every thought he thinks and every move he makes. The greatest works of the world have been achieved by men of faith, and men of superior worth never fail to admire the heart which glows with its celestial blaze.

In days of yore when India was veritably the land of spirituality, and

spiritual giants not content with possessing the knowledge of the Self themselves alone, sought to impart it to others by every means in their power, there lived somewhere in the Himalayas, a sage, blessed with the vision divine, whose chief concern in life was the spiritual education of the students, who, according to the immensely beneficial custom then in vogue, lived with him in order to learn both from precepts and examples, the hidden truths of the inner life. They were unquestionably sincere and earnest seekers after Truth. But they had not as yet completely outgrown that refined form of selfishness which clings on to the human heart long after it has been rid of other frailties of a less subtle character—which makes one unconsciously look for returns. It was, therefore, natural for them to expect that in view of the same self-denials which they all practised to serve him, their master should treat them all equally well. This not very unjust claim upon the love and sympathy of their master caused an unhappy feeling in their hearts, when, within a short time of the admission of a new disciple, their master began to give evident proofs of his particular fondness for him. This partiality of the guru was what they least expected and consequently it proved the rudest shock to them.

Gradually their zeal began to cool and their faith began to waver. The enlightenment of the disciples was

the sole object of the stainless saint and though he could distinctly see that he was lowered in their esteem he took care not to show his knowledge of it. He went on instructing them as usual without letting them know that he could see all that was going within them. But as has been said before, they were all sincere aspirants, so they hesitated to rush to the conclusion that there was something really unpardonable in their guru's conduct. The distant glimmering of a hope that they might one day get a satisfactory solution—a happy vindication—of his conduct inspired them with sufficient strength to stick to the outward forms of service to their guru. So they plodded on through their respective duties, but never with that joyful alacrity which marked their movements before.

After trying their patience to the utmost, the blessed sage one morning gathered round him all his disciples and said in a plaintive tone that he had caught a very malignant disease which would end fatally if they did not take proper care of him. The disciple, of whom he was particularly fond, warmly replied: "Take care of you! I am ready to pour out my heart's blood for you at any moment. Say, O Lord! will that rid you of the disease?"

"I know," calmly responded the sadhu, "all of you have the deepest love for me and are ready to do anything for my sake. The only remedy for the disease is, on the authority of a great Rishi, to be found in the heads of a number of doves killed in a perfectly solitary place. I wish you would particularly

attend to this condition, for, I assure you, upon that one fact turns the issue of the whole thing. Mind that each one of you cut the throat of his dove in a place where *there shall not be a single eye upon him.*" All the disciples thought it was their duty to do this not very troublesome act of service to one from whom they had undeniably gained much. So they at once left the cottage and went about in search of doves. It was noon-tide, and all the disciples, except the one the master loved most, returned home, each with a decapitated dove in his hands. They all presented themselves before the master and said they had strictly fulfilled the most important condition of the operation and insisted upon the immediate application of the remedy. The master expressed his anxiety for the delay of the favourite disciple and wished to wait till his return. Evening wore into night and still he did not turn up. The darkness of the night deepened into tangible gloom the dismal shadows that were gathering around the disciples' hearts. Had they not foregone all the pleasures of the world and served their master without the least regard for personal comforts exactly like the one he loved most? Why should he then feel particularly solicitous about him? How could partiality be consistent with sainthood? Such questions began to fearfully torment their minds now that they got what they thought a conclusive proof of the "favourite's" want of love and regard for his master. But why should they allow such doubts to disturb their peace of mind? What, if the

guru were really an ordinary man and not a saint? They might just leave him and go to a genuine saint if they chose. Yes, they might, but only if they had not tasted of the sweet of self-less devotion before the demon of suspicion made its way into their hearts. They might, if the still sweet recollections of the 'blessed past,' when fear or suspicion had not thrown its dark shadow upon the virgin purity of their souls, had been completely effaced from their memory. These sweet recollections drew their hearts by an invisible cord towards their master, even while they themselves seemed to have turned away from him in disgust and despair. This conflict of contending emotions set up a tremendous agitation in their hearts and they passed the night in an awful state of agony and despair.

The first rays of the morning sun bathed in glorious light not only the homely cottage of the Himalayan sage, but dispelled the inner gloom of every heart that was in it. Just at the break of day the favourite disciple appeared in the cottage, quite emaciated and reduced, with a living dove in his hand and prostrating himself before the venerable saint spoke in a tone of extreme humility and self-reproach, "Cursed be my lot, that I could not carry out your kind behest; I wandered all about the place in search of a solitary nook—I went into dark caves and dense forests, but alas! I could not find any. Everywhere I felt the presence of the Supreme Being, Who, as I have often heard you say 'exists in and through all that is.' Tell me, my

dear master, if the dove is to be——". Before the disciple finished his speech the blessed master had run up to him in the exuberance of joy and holding him fast in his loving arms, said, "That is why my heart is naturally drawn towards you; you have seen and felt what you have learnt in books. You are truly wise. You are the glory of my Ashrama. I feel proud of you."

The other disciples at once understood the worth of the 'favourite boy', and struck with remorse and shame fell prostrate at the guru's feet. The kind and loving guru assured them of his never-failing love and good will to them and seating them all around him began to talk in his kind and loving way. The disciples felt relieved of their troubles. All their trials were over and with hearts full of fresh zeal they applied themselves again to their spiritual pursuits.

VIMALANANDA.

There is a sentence which I find in Goethe full of meaning in this regard. It must be noted, he says, that belief and unbelief are two opposite principles in human nature. The theme of all human history, so far as we are able to perceive it, is the contest between these two principles. All periods, he goes on to say, in which belief predominates, in which it is the main element, the inspiring principle of action, are distinguished by great, soul-stirring, fertile events, and worthy of perpetual remembrance: and, on the other hand, that age is unfertile, unproductive, and intrinsically mean, in which there is no pabulum for the spirit of man, and no one can get nourishment for himself.

—Carlyle.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES IN AMERICA

II

THE Rev. Minot J. Savage recently preached a sermon on "Who are Christians?" in the Church of the Messiah, New York. The sermon is notable as the liberal message of a Christian teacher of religion, and is significant in being one of many straightforward declarations of truth for truth's sake, independent of the too commonly accepted idea in America that all true religion is bound up in Christianity.

After explaining what constituted a Christian in the early centuries after the life of Jesus on earth and recounting the history of the various creeds, doctrines and organizations in the Christian Church, Dr. Savage said:—

"We must waive these things aside, and try to find that which is essential in Christianity, somewhere else. * * * The ideal man is the man who loves, and the man who knows how to apply his love power and impetus in such a way as to help, save, transform, develop, and glorify mankind. Now is this love, truth, service,—is this the essential thing in Christianity? I think it is; and I think the man who embodies these three things is a Christian, whatever he believes else, whether he has any rites or ceremonies or symbols or not. However he may organize himself with his fellows, or whether he may organize at all or not, the man who loves and cares for truth and devotes himself to the

service of his fellow-man, lifting him into the highest life and trying to transform him into the divine likeness,—that man is my ideal type of man; and, if anybody says that that is not Christianity, then he condemns not this, but his type of Christianity.

"Shall we say, then, that there were no Christians before Christ, and that there are no Christians outside of what we call Christendom? Augustine was wiser than that. I have not been able to put my finger on just the phrase; but I can give you his idea correctly. He refers somewhere to that which has always been in the world from the beginning, and which, in these latter days, we have come to call Christian. So Augustine, the old Church Father and theologian, recognized that what he regarded as important and essential in Christianity was older than what had gone by that name. There is a verse in the famous play, "Nathan the Wise," written by the German philosopher, Lessing, that I wish to give you. Nathan is a Jew, and he is depicted as an ideal and noble man, who is conversing with a Christian; and at last the Christian says, "Why, Nathan, you are a Christian." And then Nathan replies, "What makes of me a Christian in your eyes makes you in mine a Jew." Both had the same grand human ideal. One called it Judaism, the other called it Christianity.

"I hold in my hand here a sentence I wish to read to you. If there is anything finer in spirit and purpose in any book on the face of all the earth, I wish you would find it for me; for I place this as high as anything I have ever known: 'Never will I seek or receive private, individual salvation. Never will I enter into final peace alone; but forever and ever and everywhere I will live and strive for the universal redemption of every creature throughout all the world.'

"Where do you suppose that came from? It is from a Buddhist liturgy in China. Gautama, the Buddhist, says in one place, "Evil is never overcome by evil, but always by good." Is not that just as fine as Paul saying, "Overcome evil with good"? Is it not the same thing? And is it any the worse saying of Paul because it was said in India five hundred years before Paul was born? Confucious said the Golden Rule,— "What you do not wish others to do to you, do not you to them." Is that any worse because it was said in China five hundred years before Jesus was born? Socrates met death as forgivingly as did Jesus himself, telling his condemners and accusers that he did not blame them, that they were doing what they thought was right. Is that poor because it preceded Christianity by several hundreds of years? The Stoics bore the evils of the world bravely and uncomplainingly. Is that any worse than what we call "Christian patience"? I think, for example, that, if I were a pagan, I should resent it, when some virtue that I was perfectly familiar with

among my own people was labelled "Christian virtue," as though nobody but a Christian had ever heard of it. I do not know of a single virtue that is not human, that has not been splendidly illustrated by people beyond the pale of Christianity.

"Shall I say that generosity is Christian exclusively? When I read the life of man like Sir Moses Montefiore, the Hebrew, shall I pick out these different splendid examples, and say that they are only splendid vices because the man did not wear my label?

"I believe, indeed, in Christianity. I love to wear the name, because I believe that Jesus was the one unique and most splendid illustration of the things which I admire. And I never loved him so, I never honored him so, I never was ready to offer him that almost worship if not quite, which we bestow upon the splendid illustrators of our ideals, as I am to-day. I confess I could not honor him much if I thought he was God. I do not believe that God would shrink and complain in the face of death. I do not believe that God would go through what seems to me a theatrical spectacle of suffering on the cross. But, when I think of him as a man, perhaps really doubting for a moment at the last as to whether he had been right; when he utters that terrible heart-cry, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"; when I think he was a man, ready to die for his truth whether his mind or his hope was clouded or not,—then I can bend my head and fall upon my knees in his presence, long to clasp his hand as that of my elder brother, proud of him as

leader and teacher and master, giving him my heart's allegiance, and dedicating to him my life in order that I may teach the splendid truths he illustrated, and try to bring the world to an appreciation of his ideals. For thus the light and the love and the service of God will come,—that is, God's kingdom,—and all evil will be passed away.

"Father, let Thy love and light be ours,

and let us be proud and glad that we can help Thee in the service of our fellows. And, then, if they will not let us wear the name Christian, we will wear the spirit of the Christ as our garment; and we will take his love into our hearts until it transforms us into his image. Amen."

AN AMERICAN BRAHMACHARINI.

REVIEWS

THE VEDANTA-SUTRAS with the Sri-Bhashya of Ramanujacharya. Translated into English by M. Rangacharya, M.A., and M. B. Varadaraja Aiyanger, B. A., B. L. Vol. I. Demy 8 vo. Madras, 1899.*

It is highly gratifying to us to observe that competent Indian scholars have at last begun to come out steadily with excellent translations of their rare and difficult sacred books. Messrs Rangacharya and Varadaraja have laid students of Comparative Religions and Philosophy—and that of the Vedanta in particular who are unacquainted or ill-acquainted with Sanskrit, under a deep debt of obligation by bringing out an English translation of the Sri-Bhashya. The present is the first of the three volumes in which the whole work is intended to be published. It contains by way of introduction an analytical outline running over 75 pages summarising lucidly the argument of Ramanuja on the eleven *adhikaranas* comprising the first part of the first chapter of the Vedanta-Sutras. So far as we have seen, we think the work

of translation and elucidation has been performed in an excellent manner. In our opinion, it would have added to the beauty of the work if the Sutras were given in Devanagari character instead of English.

No Indian claiming to be called educated could consistently remain ignorant of the highest product of Indian culture—the Vedanta: and no one could claim a full acquaintance with Vedanta who did not know the Vishishtadvaita System of Ramanujacharya. It is probably true that 75 per cent of Hindu thinkers owe their allegiance to Sankara, while only 15 per cent follow Ramanuja: but it must be said that Ramanuja had at least a heart as great as the head of the great Sankara, and his system is a fitting stepping-stone—we almost said complement—to Sankara's system. It is idle to suppose that a religion of the head could be suitable for all as it is to think that the philosophy of dualism could satisfy all men. It is, therefore, we find that these two systems have been growing side by side from times immemorial in India, and we think Prof. Max Müller in his latest work on Indian Philosophy des

* The Brahmavadin Press, Triplicane, Madras, price Rs 5.

cribes the situation truly when he says: "It must be admitted therefore that in India, instead of one Vedanta-Philosophy, we have really two, springing from the same root but extending its branches in two very different directions, that of Sankara being kept for unflinching reasoners who supported by an unwavering faith in Monism, do not shrink from any of its consequences; another, that of Ramanuja, trying hard to reconcile their Monism with the demands of the human heart that required, and always will require, a personal god, as the last cause of all that is, and an eternal soul that yearns for an approach to or a reunion with that Being."

The present volume is dedicated to Prof. Max Müller—a graceful and fitting tribute to the Grand Old Indian Pandit—for though outwardly a German, his sympathies, instinct and life-long devotion show distinctly enough what his inner man is.

We congratulate the translators on their successful performance and hope they will not be long in redeeming their pledge by bringing out the two remaining volumes.

SPEECHES of the Day containing the Congress Presidential Address by Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt, C. I. E.; Address at the Social Conference by the Hon. Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade, C. I. E.; Address at the Muhamadan Educational Conference by the Hon. Mr. Justice Amir Ali and Report of the Madras Educational Conference is a small book of 80 pages published by the enterprising firm of Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co. of Madras. Messrs. Natesan & Co. are doing excellent work by preserving in book-form the utterances of the greatest Indians and friends of India on the most important political, social and educational questions of the day. This is the best means of educating our young men of the wants of our country and the ways of meeting them.

THE UPANISHADS, VOL. IV —
CHHANDOGYA. Translated by
Ganganath Jha, M. A., F. T. S., and published
by V. C. Seshacharri, B. A. B. L., M. R. A. S.,
Madras. Crown 8vo., 1899.*

A true and adequate idea of the many-sidedness and grandeur of what is popularly known as Hinduism is impossible without a thorough acquaintance with its fountain-head—the Vedas—which feeds its numerous channels with what is most suited to the form and situation of each one of them. The goal whereto all these channels lead is most vividly set forth in the Upanishads—aptly styled the end of the Vedas—which are the most beautiful expression of the highest spiritual experiences of the Rishis of old. Any honest and wisely directed attempt to make them accessible to a wider circle of interested people, cannot fail to prove highly helpful to them. We have, therefore, little doubt that Mr. Jha's labours in the field of translating the Upanishads will be productive of immense good both at home and abroad, though we are forced to say that the work under review would admit of improvement in several places by a closer rendering of the original and a more careful choice of words to express the intended idea. We fully trust that a little more attention on the part of the accomplished translator will render his succeeding editions an invaluable treasury to every student of Indian Scriptures. Mr. Jha has added immensely to the merit of the book by giving Sankara's commentary which alone enables us to understand the apparently divergent Upanishad-texts consistently with the transcendental monism which meets us everywhere in the utterances of the Rishis and satisfies fully the demands of reason at the same time that it affords infinite scope for the expansion of the human heart. Another happy feature of the book is the original texts in Deva Nagri character.

*G. A. Natesan & Co., Esplanade, Madras.

We wish that, every encouragement be given to Mr. Jha and his patriotic publisher to enable them to bring this noble undertaking to a successful end.

PARAMARTHA-DARSANAM is a religio-philosophical work in Sanskrit verse by Pandit

Kesava Narayan Damale. It contains healthy and helpful Hindu teachings for the aspirant after the Paramartha in the stages of his intellectual boyhood, youth and manhood. Pandit Damale deserves encouragement. Indira Press, Poona.

NĀNĀ KATHĀ

THE sixty-seventh Birthday Anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated with the usual enthusiasm and earnestness in the Behar Math, the occasion being seized by men of almost all grades of social position, culture and religious beliefs for joining in love and sympathy with people of different faiths and views in a cause of general spiritual weal. The number of men who were present in the festival is estimated at about 20,000. The poor were fed by thousands.

THE report of the Madras Math surpasses our most sanguine expectation. From ten in the morning till four in the evening over five thousand poor of all castes and creeds were sumptuously fed, amongst whom were some Moslems and Native Christians.

THE earnest members of the Dacca Ramakrishna Mission did not let the occasion pass without a demonstration of their deep loyalty to the Blessed Master. They spent the whole day in meditating upon his inspiring memory, feeding guests and giving alms to the poor, the destitute and the blind.

THE Kishengurh Orphanage in addition to an extra sumptuous feast to its inmates collected all the poor (about 1500) in the town by the beating of tomtom and fed them on the anniversary day. We understand many gentlemen took part and kindly helped the Swami Kalyanananda in the management of the festivity.

It gives us unalloyed pleasure to learn that the Raja of Ramnad fed about one thousand poor people in commemoration of the birth of one whose heart ever bled for suffering humanity.

"WE (the Vedanta Society, New York) observed the festival of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday on the evening of 2nd March—so as to more nearly coincide with the celebration in Calcutta on the 3rd. We decorated the picture of Sri Ramakrishna with flowers and placed living plants before it and burned incense and then sat in meditation for a long time."

THE visit of the Swami Vivekananda to California, U. S. during the past winter has been productive of much good—the genial climate, so far restored his health, that he was enabled to give lectures at Los Angeles, which proved a most fruitful soil for implanting the Vedantic thought. The Swami after some weeks residence at Los Angeles has proceeded to San Francisco, where he purposes to pursue his teachings on the Indian philosophy.

THE conception of the world as deduced from the Veda, and chiefly from the Upanishads, is indeed astounding. It could hardly have been arrived at by a sudden intuition or inspiration, but presupposes a long preparation of metaphysical thought, undisturbed by any foreign influences. All that exists is taken as One, because if the existence of anything besides the absolute One or the Supreme Being were admitted, whatever the Second by the side of the One might be, it would constitute a limit to what was postulated as limitless, and would have made the concept of the One self-contradictory. But then came the question for Indian philosophers to solve, how it was possible, if there was but the One, that there should be multiplicity in the world, and that there should be constant change in our experience. They knew that the one absolute and undetermined essence, what they called Brahman, could have received no impulse to change, either from itself, for it was perfect, nor from others, for it was Secondless.

Then what is the philosopher to say to this manifold and ever-changing world? There is one thing only that he can say, namely, that it is not and cannot be real, but must be accepted as the result ofnescience or Avidya, not only of individual ignorance, but of ignorance as inseparable from human nature. That ignorance, though unreal in the highest sense, exists, but it can be destroyed by Vidya, knowledge, i. e. the knowledge conveyed by the Vedanta, and as nothing that can at any time be annihilated has a right to be considered as real, it follows that this cosmic ignorance also must be looked upon as not real, but temporary only. It cannot be said to exist, nor can it be said not to exist, just as our own ordinary ignorance, though we suffer from it for a time, can never claim absolute reality and perpe-

tuity. It is impossible to define Avidya, as little as it is possible to define Brahman, with this difference, however, that the former can be annihilated, the latter never. The phenomenal world which, according to the Vedanta, is called forth, like the mirage in a desert, has its reality in Brahman alone. Only it must be remembered that what we perceive can never be the absolute Brahman, but a perverted picture only. Just as the moon which we see manifold and tremulous in its everchanging reflections on the waving surface of the ocean, is not the real moon, though deriving its phenomenal character from the real moon which remains unaffected in its unapproachable remoteness.

—Max Müller.

A COPY of "Occult Truths, a monthly magazine hinting at Divine Alchemy or that wisdom and those mysteries which alone can be understood by initiates, edited by Anagaraka Caskadananda," published at Washington D. C. has been sent to us. "That wisdom and those mysteries which alone can be understood by initiates!"—well, we suppose non-initiates must keep at their distance, but "Anagaraka Caskadananda"! This takes away the breath of non-initiates! We have heard of *Anagarika*—it is a Pali word we believe, meaning something like the Sanskrit Brahmacharin—but Anagaraka? Is it Occult-Americanised Pali? And "Cask ad ananda"? The first word (cask), we presume is English, and the two following, Sanskrit. "Caskad" means (to the non-initiated understanding of course) "giver or eater of casks" and so Caskadananda means "bliss in the giver or eater of casks." This is really an occult piece of alchemical blending worthy of the Divine Wisdom of the Washington initiates!

"THE Gospel v. Drink" is the title of a comparison by Harold Macfarlane in the Sunday Magazine between our annual expenditure on intoxicants and on foreign mission. On evangelism the United Kingdom spends £1355440 a year, and on alcohol £154480934.

—Review of Reviews.